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ABSTRACT

An analysis of Maori parental participation in the New Zealand educational system is presented: Part I is a tentative theory-building exercise for examining existing parental participatory groups; Part II reviews Maori activity on voluntary committees that administer to schools; and Part III sets out some suggestions for research. The typology of parental participatory groups in education is based on "interest" groups (arising from outside the education system), "contest groups" (requiring an election or contest), and "sponsored" groups (arising out of the principle of positive discrimination). Maori parents are, in general, reluctant participants in attempts that schools make to involve them in activities officially sanctioned by schools, and where Maori parents do participate, it is usually in the field of "Maori-oriented activities." Maori parental involvement in schools is determined by variables involving rural or urban contexts and whether communities are predominantly Maori, ethnically mixed (and Maori strength within that mix), and attitudes of principals and teachers in working with the Maori. The research section suggests need for data collation of the number of Maori parents serving on officially constituted bodies. The policy section concludes that until the education system learns to share power, Maori involvement in education will remain peripheral. (BRR)

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"MAORI PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM : BEYOND THE OUTWARD EMBRACE"

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1 Preamble

In a recent newspaper article, the Minister of Education, whilst addressing the New Zealand Parent Teacher Association annual conference, was reported to have said, "A specific concern I have is for the need for greater involvement of Maori and Pacific Island parents and communities in the formal education of their children". ("The Evening Post", Monday, 24 August 1981)

It is probably safe to speculate that most teachers in New Zealand, and likely the majority of those laymen familiar with our formal system, would share Mr Wellington's concern. However, as I intend to illustrate, it is clearly unwise to take too much for granted when making public statements about the nature and kinds of involvement that parents have and make in the formal education of their children. It is even less wise to single out for comment a minority category of all possible parents such as those indicated in the title of this paper.

Firstly, the absence of recent research in New Zealand in this field of general parental participation, forces dependancy on generalised statements based on experience or an analysis of what seems to be the case according to the overseas literature.

Secondly, although officially constituted parental bodies attached to all our formal educational institutions are a matter of public record, the ethnic composition of those groups is not a criterion for selection. We know how many parents must be on each and we also know the other categories for membership that must be satisfied.

As an example, the constitution of a secondary school Board of Governors is as follows:

1 member appointed by the local Education Board;
6 members elected by parents of pupils attending the school;
1 member appointed by the School Committees' Association;
1 member elected by the teachers of the school;
1 member to be co-opted by the Board of Governors itself, if and when it thinks fit.

(N Z Gazette No 53, page 1136, 28 August 1958)

To ascertain the number of Maori parents on the various administrative councils requires a survey of those councils. (The appended table of one small city district is an indication of the sort of data needed to even begin exploratory research.)

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Thirdly, few educationists would assess parental involvement only at the level of officially constituted bodies. Indeed, most are more likely to count as parental involvement those activities initiated by the school and/or by the parents themselves rather than those arising out of regulations. The complexities in assessing involvement of this kind is an urgent research requirement if we are to move beyond generalised impressions, statements of opinion, and professions of faith offered as statements of fact.

Finally, the New Zealand education system has, over the past 20 odd years, established a strong network of formal consultative groups, some of which have considerable responsibility and influence. An interesting departure from the officially constituted bodies (school committees, boards of governors etc.) is the presence of an ethnic clause included in the composition of several of these consultative groups.

2 Outline of Paper

Within the limitations already outlined, I will -

(a) differentiate the various levels of parental involvement along a 'local'-'national' continuum;

(b) distinguish between two modes of participation referred to as 'contest' and 'sponsored';

(c) establish arbitrary categories to help clarify the objectives of each type of participating group.

This is Part I of the paper and is a tentative theory-building exercise for examining existing parental participatory groups.

Part II makes claims in answer to the questions: "Do Maori parents involve themselves in the formal education of their children?" That is, do they serve on the voluntary committees that administer to schools?

A secondary question which arises is: "Assuming minimal involvement, but sufficient to establish patterns of participation, what might account for the discrepancy between Maori and Pakeha parental participation?"

Part III sets out some suggestions for research in this field.

PART I

3 A Typology of Parental Participatory Groups in Education

When speaking of parental participation and involvement I will be referring throughout to groups of parents rather than to individuals. It is maintained that each of the groups function basically at only 1 level of the education system, although their effects in terms of influence, manifest in the decisions they

make or the actions they follow, have the potential of affecting outcomes at levels both above and below that which they represent.

The mode of participation and the groups typically located at each level are as follows:

4 Type 1 : "Local 'Interest' Groups"

These groups typically arise from outside the education system, and often, although not always, consider formal educational matters of secondary importance to some other purpose that brings them together. Because of this other prime function, the status of 'parent' is likely to be of little or no consequence.

Local interest groups that are typically Maori would include-

Marae committee
Tu Tangata committee
Kokiri committee
Maori Women's Welfare League.

Local interest groups that might include a Maori in its membership are -

Federated Farmers
Employers Federation
Service Clubs, etc.

Type 1 participant groups often affect educational policy and curricula indirectly, that is, mainly through the efforts of their central affiliated bodies such as the Maori Affairs Department, The New Zealand Maori Council or the National Executive of the Federated Farmers Association. Instance the "Tu Tangata" programmes' influence on careers education for Maori students in secondary schools; the New Zealand Maori Councils support of the disestablishment of the School Certificate system; Federated Farmers influence in bringing about new government policy in agricultural education. (See Roy Nash article on "Pushy Cockies and Latin")

Whether indirect or not, the effect each of these groups have had on educational policies over the years, is real enough in their consequences.

5 Type 2 : "Local 'Contest' Groups"

Ralph Turner used the concepts of "sponsored" and "contest" when speaking of the manner in which the accepted mode of upward mobility shaped the school systems of America and Britain.

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Local contest groups in education include:

School Committees
Parent-Teacher Association
Boards of Governors.

I have referred to these as 'local contest groups' because positions on each of these bodies are essentially determined by a form of election or 'contest' in which those who compete for places, win them by displaying certain credentials which identify him/her as being most deserving of the status of member. The establishment and interpretation of criteria of membership status is determined by society at large. The competition is considered to be a fair one since all the players compete on an equal footing as parents. Those who succeed are not necessarily the most able but they will be considered the most deserving.

6 Type 3 : National 'Contest' Groups

Like 'local contest groups' those at the national level frequently function as 'big brother' and as such, seek direct negotiation with the central Department of Education and Government on the affairs that affect the members. In spite of their numerical strength and their relative visibility through the media, national contest groups are, on the whole, conservative and therefore status quo orientated.

Examples of such groups include:

N Z Education Boards Association
N Z Secondary Schools Boards Association
N Z Parent-Teacher Association.

7 Type 4 National 'Sponsored' Groups

The main difference between 'contest' and 'sponsored' groups is the manner in which the accepted mode of inclusion in the groups is upheld. Membership on 'contest' groups arise out of the norm of equality of opportunity and the implementation of an election; 'sponsored' membership arises out of the principle of positive discrimination and favours a controlled selection process. As Turner has argued (ibid page 74), "in this process, the elite or their agents deemed to be best qualified to judge merit, choose individuals for elite status who have the appropriate qualities .... The nature of the sponsored assigns to credentials the function of identifying elite members to one another."

Groups formed under this category that have a distinctively Maori orientation include:

The National Advisory Committee on Maori Education
The Advisory Committee on the Teaching of Maori
The Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education

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Inter-Departmental Committee on Maori Education
The Maori Education Foundation
The Ngarimu VC Fund Board

(See Appendix II for an annotated summary of these consultative groups. I am indebted to the Director of Maori and Island Education for providing this section.)

8 Type 5 : Local 'Sponsored' Groups

Sponsored groups which arise in the local community have as a goal the utilisation of talents in the best interests of that community. Since recognised elite hierarchies exist in both Maori and in Pakeha societies, we should not be surprised that dual systems have emerged where the monopolising of elite credentials dependent upon the two social structures have been fostered. The main difference between local 'interest' and 'sponsored' groups lies in the focus for each. As has already been stated, for 'interest' groups, educational matters are likely to be of only secondary importance; for 'sponsored' groups, some aspect of the educational curriculum is the prime target for the groups activities. A further difference lies in the approach each has to membership: both are likely to attract a specific kind of clientele (based on sex or ethnicity or occupation or age etc.) and both are likely to second specialist assistance as part of their artillery. Whereas 'interest' groups are seeking to transform their situation, essentially through providing a more relevant perspective for themselves and others, 'sponsored' groups provide a direct challenge to the status quo and are therefore, crisis-orientated. Membership in the former is based on consensus and in the latter, on conflict. Consensus and conflict are of course, potentialities within both groups but where underlying change finds its emphasis in 'catalytic' approaches for 'interest' groups, the emphasis is on 'turbulent' approaches in 'sponsored' groups.

Examples of locally 'sponsored' groups include -

Concerned Parents Association
Te Huinga Rangatahi
Alternative School Advocates.

(See Figure 1)

9 Objective Categories for the Various Types of Participating Parental Groups

9.1 Type 1 local 'interest' groups are involved in a voluntary capacity in activities that only incidentally include formal educational participation.

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Figure 1.

SCHEMA OF 'CONTEST' AND 'SPONSORED' PARTICIPATION AT THE 'LOCAL' AND 'NATIONAL' LEVEL IN THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM,

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION	MODES OF PARTICIPATION: CONTEST	MODES OF PARTICIPATION: SPONSORED
LOCAL	Type 2 School Committee Parent-Teacher Assoc. Board of Governors	Type 5 Concerned Parents Assoc. Te Huinga Rangatahi Alternative Schools
NATIONAL	Type 3 NZ Educ. Boards Assoc. NZ Second. Schools Boards Assoc. NZ Parent-Teachers Assoc. NZ School Committees Assoc.	Type 4 NACME ACTML ACBE MEF IDCME NVCFB See Appendix II

Type 1 *

Marae Committee
Tu Tangata Committee
Kokiri Committee
Maori Women's Welfare League

* Although Type 1 are labelled 'local interest groups' they remain outside the grid because they are neither 'contest' nor 'sponsored' in the sense that these descriptors have been defined.

Their educational concerns, when they do turn to them, are likely to be along the lines of a "catalytic intervention', (See Blake and Mouton, page 53) that is, they are apt to draw the systems attention to itself so that it can more clearly see its own shortcomings and thus bring about the necessary changes in line with a closer approximation of the objectives of the 'interest' group. Catalytic groups have neither the political power nor usually the inclination to use more coercive measures to effect change. The concern of local Maori "interest" groups have traditionally been on a voluntary basis in schools, often out of timetable hours and rarely for any other purpose than to help in whatever manner the school has requested.

9.2 Type 2 local 'contest' groups may be seen as fostering its main purpose, the development of shared convictions in regard to answering the key question, "How can we create better relations between schools and communities?"

Groups such as these are traditionally conservative, concerned with the distribution of formal authority, and the maintenance of a quasi-legal framework. They focus on matters of regulation, accountability and the more formal channels of communication. They are therefore inclined to be miniature bureaucracies and middle-class orientated. Because of this kind of background "cultural capital", (See Bourdieu) I have labelled this type of participation "acceptant intervention", (See Blake and Mouton, page 48). There is little discrepancy between the normative values of the dominant cultural stream and the values of these groups. We could predict a low level of Maori parental participation at the level of local 'contest' groups.

9.3 Type 3 national 'contest' groups, like the local 'contest' groups from whence they came, tend to be similar in composition, in organisation and in outlook, as might be expected. It might also be expected that their greater representative strength could lead to a more radical and coercive approach to intervention in the interests of those they act for. The fact of the matter is that type 3 participatory groups tend to be ultra-conservative, pre-occupied with policy, and take as their responsibility, results through the intervention of concepts and ideas, the testing of alternatives, decisions about the most appropriate action having considered the consequences of those proposed actions, and then communicating those proposals to their membership. It is this "ideological intervention" that characterises national 'contest' groups. Again we can predict an even lower degree of Maori parental participation at this level.

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Where 'contest' groups at the local level were miniature bureaucracies, at the national level they might be best described as following a technical model: they are goal-directed; governed by external criteria determined in accordance with the perceived needs of society; they assume a rational separation of ends and means; and they function as a basic economic systems model.

9.4 Type 4 national 'sponsored' groups in the general field of Maori Education are extremely important in that their struggle for bi-culturalism in the curriculum and in the education system as a whole has rarely been in our history so closely bound up with the struggle for social emancipation of the Maori. The question of Maori representativeness in each of these consultative groups no longer is a problem. In most cases the Maori is represented by Maoris, both lay and professional in background. In a very real sense the composition of the Maori representation, as a group, may be considered the "intellectual elites" by both Maori and Pakeha populations: a social group with all the advantages of authority with none of the disadvantages of power. (See Raymond Williams).

It is this notion of authority without power that leads me to characterise national 'sponsored' group participation as "prescriptive intervention". It is clear that these recommendations would be directions if they had the authority of rank. Since this is not the case they certainly prescribe and these are often very complete and fundamental.

9.5 Type 5 local 'sponsored' groups are virtually non-existent in Maori terms, where educational matters are the focus and the major reason for the existence of the group. One well-known exception was the now defunct "Whanganui Maori Education Advancement Committee" (See "Te Ao Hou").

Three points which appear to characterise parental participation in these groups may be summarised as follows:

(a) there is a challenge to the status quo;

(b) vested interest plays a significant role;

(c) it is exemplified in a more active intrusion into all facets of the system but expecially in that section which they represent.

The greatest promise of Maori participation in this form of "turbulent intervention" is in the field of pre-school education and to a lesser degree, at the tertiary level. "Te Huinga Rangatahi" is representative at the latter while "Community Pre-School Workers" have emerged in the former institutions.

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10 Summary

It is not accidental that I have tied Type 1 "local interest groups" and Type 5 "local sponsored groups" so closely. The first has Maori participation as a matter of course; the second, has an emergent Maori interest. The problem of attracting participants of the first into the second (not instead of, but as well) might be solved in the concept of "sponsoring" or in the American terminology, "affirmative action", or by the application of "quota systems".

It is unlikely that any of these 'solutions' will count by the majority as being worthwhile solutions.

Dominant ideologies that have promoted egalitarianism and its spouse, meritocratic ideals, are likely to consider quotas or affirmative action policies, such as has been suggested, somewhat immoral on the grounds that the sponsoring part of the affirmative action is discriminatory. This view is obviously wrong. Sponsoring does not make race or ethnicity qualifications for promoting parental participation. Maoris and other minorities are scheduled to be participant to demonstrate that being a non-minority and Pakeha are not qualifications. As Type 4 categories have illustrated, the "solution" already has a precedent. The problem is a translation of the same scheme at local level. (See Figure 2)

PART II

1 Claims About Maori Parental Involvement : The Outward Embrace

The claims made by teachers and educational administrators about the participation of Maori parents in New Zealand schools can be summarised as follows:

1.1 General Reluctance

Most Maori parents are reluctant participants in the formal schooling of their childrer. That is, teachers generally find it difficult to persuade these parents into their classrooms and principals have had similar difficulty in getting Maori parents to volunteer for service on controlling bodies such as school committees and boards of governors.

1.2 Teacher Success When Involvement is Maori Orientated

A second claim, and as though offered as a buffer to the criticism of the first claim, is contained in the following dialogue which was taken from a recent interview with the principal of a city primary school.

"We can't get them along to formal sessions such as those instigated by our school committee but the greater informality of PTA meetings seems to be more successful in drawing them away from their television sets and into the schools.

Figure 2.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARTICIPATING PARENTAL GROUPS.

	MODES OF PARTICIPATION	
	CONTEST	SPONSORED
LOCAL	Type 2. "acceptant"	Type 1. "catalytic" Type 5. "turbulent"
NATIONAL	Type 3. "ideological"	Type 4. "presriptive"

OBJECTIVES:

"catalytic" - adds to the system; notions of vested interest; incidental interest in education rather than schooling.

"acceptant" - developing shared convictions; status quo oriented; bureaucratic; supportive of formal authority.

"ideological" - normative; concerned with the maintenance of efficiency of the machine; regulation directed.

"prescriptive" - consultative; meritocratic; social and intellectual elites; authoritative without power.

"turbulent" - pose a potential threat to the system; strong vested interest in some cause; politically active.

However, our attempts to interest Maori parents in both these organisations fail miserably when results such as these are compared with the kind of involvement that individual teachers are likely to generate. When our teachers are conducting class work that could be labelled 'Maori orientated' such as occurs now and then in social studies, or in Maori Club, or for a trip where money needs to be raised, the problem of Maori parental involvement becomes a problem of a different kind. For example, if a number of them turn up at school, they have a tendency to take over proceedings and the teachers end up getting agitated. There is a good chance, in our case, that the Maoris who do attend are likely to come from various tribal groups which often leads to friction among themselves over matters of leadership or appropriate protocol. At that point, I'm on the spot. They have the expert knowledge in this field but I must support the children, the teachers, and the programme, in that order, if the activity is to be accomplished successfully. Parental involvement is, in other words, of secondary importance where conflict arises outside the control of the school. We would rather they went home.'

A summary of this second claim is that Maori parents do participate in school activities but only in a narrow sense - when the activities for involvement reflect a specific 'Maori orientation'.

1.3 Partial Success With 'Middle-Class' Maori

A further claim is that middle-class Maori parents, like middle-class Pakeha parents, are concerned about the education of their children and will participate in the activities of the school in a similar manner. I think it would be true to argue that even these Maori parents do not volunteer as readily as Pakeha parents do for inclusion on the more formal controlling committees. For activities such as 'parent interviews', school 'workshops', 'library duties', and 'information-imparting' gatherings, their attendance is regular and as predictable as any parents. Where there is a Maori parent on a committee such as school committee, home and school committee and board of governors, it is likely that that person is either by occupation a professional, a civic leader or someone in business. It is in this general sense that I use the dismissive label, middle-class.

1.4 Rural Community Tradition

Other claims relate to the geographical location of the school community. Differences of participation are likely to occur along a rural-urban continuum.

In rural areas, parental participation in New Zealand has been traditional. Differences in the degrees of participation, as far as Maori parents are concerned, have been determined by such factors as the size of the community, whether the local school is serving a community which is generally Maori in nature (if the school prior to 1968 was a Maori School), or whether it is of an ethnic mix in composition.

1.4.1 Rural Dominant Maori Response

It is claimed that in rural schools serving a predominantly Maori community, Maori parents will participate with the school in direct proportion to the interest shown by the principal in that community. Where the principal demonstrates a commitment to the community; he attends local community gatherings; he allows students to attend the more important gatherings especially during term; he permits the community to use the school buildings and resources; he acts as a facilitator when the community needs his help to help solve their problems; he keeps parents well-informed on the activities affecting their children; the response and support he will receive from that community will be reciprocal. Where principals remain aloof from the kind of commitment just outlined, even though their educational professionalism is beyond question, the support they will receive will be minimal. The latter kind of principal often rationalises his position in the following way:

'I always have difficulty getting these parents along to school but even when I do, those who come tell me not to worry. The school is my problem - the community is theirs. My job is to get on with the task of educating their children, so that they will be accomplished in the basics, so that they will succeed later in those things they will need to get themselves a good job.'

Faith in the school to provide opportunities for occupational mobility is inherent in rural Maori communities. We can assume that Maori parents have a parallel faith in themselves and in the community environment to socialise their children in those aspects of Maoritanga that they will need, to take their future rightful places in their community. There is no history of militancy to include greater quantities of Maoritanga in the curriculum of schools servicing strong rural Maori communities - at least, certainly not publicly and certainly not from lay participant groups from those communities.

1.4.2 Ethnically Mixed Rural Maori Response

The fifth claim relates to rural schools serving an ethnically mixed community. The pattern of Maori parental participation is likely to follow, the expectations as outlined in the first claim.

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Teachers have first to demonstrate their abiding interest in that community, secondly, they have to impress their children in their sincerity for their concerns and that they do indeed hold positive learning expectations for those children, and, finally, when the principal shows a willingness to go beyond the usual newsletter request for parental involvement, chances of succeeding will undoubtedly be enhanced. Going beyond newsletters implies visiting homes to persuade parents to participate but most important is attendance at Maori gatherings (at 'hui') to listen, to follow, to learn and then to share.

Ethnically-mixed rural communities in New Zealand, as in most countries of the world, are likely also to be socio-culturally varied including land-owners, those who serve the land-owners, those who provide pastoral services for the community, and those who have their labour to offer.

1.4.3 Rural Socio-Economically Mixed Maori Response

In this situation parents who are most likely to offer their services to the school most often will exclude those social categories at the two extremes of this socio-economic continuum. Most parents who are Maori will occupy these extreme positions with the majority being workers. Thos who have labour to offer will volunteer it when involvement is likely to be 'Maori orientated'.

The division of labour has been well tested and is likely to follow along similar lines to gatherings held on the local marae. The sense of purpose, of cohesion, of inevitable enjoyment permeates such involvement and Maori parents, like those Pakeha parents who attend these, will eagerly anticipate the next similar outing. It is obvious that the demonstration of their cultural expertise, even when divorced from its usual place of practice, is participation at a high level and one which only infrequently, schools take advantage of.

.4.4 Rural Ethnically-Mixed Maori Minority Response

In an ethnically mixed rural community where the Maori is very much a minority, participation in the events of the school, are likely to be either non-existent or consistent with the involvement of all other parents. The determining factor is bound to be related to the social history of the community and issues of land tenure. Where the Maori community has suffered from the various modes of land alienation, the group tends to be suspicious of Pakeha influences.

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Where the Maori community has maintained sufficient quantities of its own lands the patterns of behaviour are more supportive.

1.5 A Sense of Community

Maori parents in rural communities like Pakeha parents in rural communities will participate in the affairs of the school but this is likely to be less a function of the wishes of the school as an outcome of a sense of security in the community. This security is as much a result attached to tenure as it is a reflection of the respect and the dignity that members of the community, which the school is, of course, an important part, uphold on its behalf.

1.6 Urban Responses

I now focus on some of the claims made about Maori parental participation in urban schools. To set the scene for this most important section let me quote a portion from the report of the President of the New Zealand Maori Council "Looking toward the 1980's". (op cit)

> "In the last 15-20 years many long and serious talks have been held on the changes taking place in New Zealand and in Maoridom. Many reports have been written. Many recommendations have been made about what we should and should not be doing; about integrating completely with the Pakeha majority, or developing our own unique cultural style.
>
> Many changes have taken place during that time. The most important has been the urbanisation of the Maori people. In the 1950's one in four of us lived in urban areas; now it is at least three in every four - a massive shift in population in one generation."

The urbanisation of the Maori is a relatively recent phenomenon which occurred simultaneously with a rapid rise in that population - about 115,000 in 1951 to an excess of 280,000 today or almost 10% of the total New Zealand population. As might also be expected, the Maori population is also an extremely youthful one - about 60% under the age of 20 (as against 40% for the total population) - the parenting generation makes up about 30% which is approximately the same for the total population, but in the older age group where the leadership will be expected to come from, the Maori population over the age of 45 years is only about 10% compared with the total of 30% for New Zealand. At school age, Maori pupils in 1979 constituted more than 14% of the primary and secondary school population. (Statistics taken from the above report.)

Maori families will be found in the residential areas of any New Zealand city or urban locality. In some suburbs they will be a minority and in others they will form a significant proportion of the population of that suburb, while in other areas of the city they will be in proportion to the region as a whole.

1.6.1 Urban Maori Minority Response

In urban areas where Maori parents clearly are a minority they are likely to be both voiceless and invisible in the public affairs of that locality. As might also be expected, their participation at the level of school administration is liable to be minimal.

Very few Maori families domicile themselves in areas where few other Maori families live or where access to other Maori families can only be accomplished with considerable difficulty. The element of choice of residential location for those who have the money today is certainly not as easy as it was a decade ago and in spite of families who might wish to take advantage of more populated and settled areas, the availability of mortgages loaded in favour of new housing developments and new suburban regions cannot be overlooked.

Schools in these regions, where Maori parents are known to reside, are likely to go to some pains to establish the services of one or two of them on their controlling bodies. There is some criticism of tokenism in these situations. This is not to deny the real sincerity of members of existing controlling boards in their overt expressions of goodwill for minorities who find themselves in these positions.

1.6.2 Urban Maori as a Significant Group

In the urban community where the Maori family is numerically in significant proportion to the majority, schools will continue to experience frustration over disproportionate parental involvement with Maori parents still being the most difficult to attract.

In the eyes of the parents, the schools are still Pakeha institutions run by Pakehas for Pakehas. Concessions to things Maori are not seen as arising out of a true feeling for Maoritanga nor are they seen or perceived as wanting to understand the Maori mind. Maori families in urban and rural communities today are asking why the school not only wishes to include more of Maori culture in the general curriculum and to teach the language but also for the first time in its history is considering affirmative action policies to 'put' Maori parents onto the committees; educationists have in the past, gone to considerable pains to ensure that in the field of Maori knowledge, values, and indeed parental participation, minimum was optimum.

We can anticipate increased participation if schools communicate the fact that they contribute to the problem of Maori student underachievement, and are prepared to take positive steps to bring about change.

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1.6.3 Urban Maori Proportionate

When Maori and Pakeha families contributing to an urban school are approximately in similar proportion to the Maori-Pakeha population of the region, levels of participation are likely to be entirely dependent on the efforts of the principal and his teachers.

1.7 Summary of Claims

As a summary, and in answer to the question, 'Do Maori parents attand school functions and do they volunteer for service on school controlling boards?' a precis of the claims made are as follows:

* Maori parents are in general, reluctant participants in the attempts that schools make to involve them in the activities officially sanctioned by schools;

* Where Maori parents do participate, it is usually in the field of 'Maori-orientated activities';

* Maori parents of a middle-class background are likely to show a concern for education that approximates a similar concern expressed by middle-class Pakeha parents. The most obvious manifestation of this concern is the degree of visibility that marks their attendance at school functions - their faces, if not their voices are frequently seen at school meetings;

* In rural schools serving a predominantly Maori community, Maori parents are likely to play as full a part in the life of the school as the principal will 'permit'. The principal's permission will be determined by the parents in how they perceive his commitment to their community. Where the principal is a reluctant participant in the community, especially in the Maori community, the separation of teacher from parental role is most clearly drawn. A reciprocal relationship exists;

* In ethnically-mixed rural communities where the Maori is a minority, they are usually non-participant except where schools go out of their way to include them and/or the type of involvement can be characterised as enhancing Maori expertise;

* In ethnically-mixed rural communities where the Maori minority retain strong 'tangatawhenua' status, that is, they are seen by the community as a whole as not only belonging but indeed must be consulted on any decision that will affect the community. Participation in the affairs of the school, although not likely to be spontaneous, can be counted on to be thoroughly pervasive when it does occur;

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- In ethnically-mixed rural communities where the Maori minority have been dispossessed of all but their 'papakainga' (their village lands) or where they are in fact displaced people (outside their customary tribal regions), involvement in school matters are likely to be viewed with suspicion or with submission;

- In urban areas where Maori families are a distinct minority, participation in schools is likely to be minimal;

- In urban areas where Maori families formed a significant proportion of the population of that area their participation is likely to depend on the principal making it clear that their co-operation with the school was valued and that he was prepared to demonstrate his own commitment to the community. At the classroom level, programmes that implement aspects of 'Maoritanga' invariably attract the Maori parent. Out of all urban demographic categories, where the Maori population figures significantly, schools in these areas are likely to be the most successful in attracting Maori parental participation;

- In urban areas where the Maori population serving a school is not significant, Maori parental involvement is likely to be slight. Principals who try hard have some success and so do sympathetic teachers.

2 Conclusions

Maori parents do participate in the activities of the school at the level of the classroom but the characteristic most clearly influential in attracting parental involvement is whether the activities for participation relate to things Maori, that is, whether in content, in orientation or in style, a distinctive Maori expertise is called for.

I suggest the same determinants translated on Pakeha terms, attract Pakeha parents to schools. The problem is that schools too often mirror only one world both on ideological and in pragmatic terms.

Geraldine McDonald (1977) also seeks to remind us that propinquity is another factor (people choose to associate with others with whom they feel comfortable), as is automony (they should perceive themselves as having a chance to control this group even if they never take advantage of the opportunity).

It is also a truism that Maori parents are reluctant participants in the formal education of their children. To argue that Maori parents are not interested in this process except for those Maori who are middle-class is of course not true.

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That Maori parents appear to be non-commital on the issue of participation in education should not be surprising to anyone who knows our schools. That Maori parents do participate to the degree that they do is promise enough of what is now thinkable and in the near future, possible.

At the level of formal committees and authorities the characteristic most clearly influential in determining whether Maori parents will volunteer their services or not, is whether the principal demonstrates a basic commitment to the local district and especially to that section which is Maori. In so far that the principal and his school is expected to reflect community values, community members who are Maori rather than those who are not Maori are certainly better able to say what those values are. The problems the school must face: commitment to the general field of education; commitment to the local community; the search for professionalism and autonomy; genuine parental participation, sometimes in the face of stated intentions to enlarge their control of the school; are indeed enormous. As pointed out by our Director-General, "In our societies (Australia and New Zealand), education is becoming too important to be left to the professionals .... Relationships between professionals and laymen will be as important as relationships among professionals". (Renwick 1977)

As though that was not problem enough, I have also argued that Maori parents who are most likely to participate at the level of schools is as much a function of their status along a dominant-minority continuum with regard to the community they live in, as are the values reflected by the school which serves them. Where Maori communities are culturally and socially secure Maori individuals within it are more likely to volunteer their assistance than those communities where a high degree of anomie and alienation characterise the public mood. Once again I will maintain that we should not be surprised that the overtures for participation emanating from the latter school fall on deaf ears. Whether Maori or Pakeha the ill-fortune and problems facing the daily survival of these people cannot be underlined enough. Schools, simply are not the priority, however important we as educators believe they are.

The explanations usually given for the relative non-participation of Maori parents (shyness, apathy and lack of interest) is not an established fact, as the Minister of Education in the already mentioned press release quite rightfully pointed out. I hope that this brief analysis into one corner of the system has helped further to dispel the myth of non-participation on the grounds of not caring.

PART III

1 Policy and Research

The ethical issues involved in decisions over policy and research in the area of Maori parental participation in education are extraordinarily complex. Policies which deal with the process of intervention design must necessarily deal with questions of goals, action and motivation. Obviously, conflicts over the justice of equality and inequality have been - and still are - at the heart of many struggles over public policies whether they deal with educational opportunity, job chances, access to schools, or health care. Thus there is a practical need to know how much equality and inequality for whom, compared to whom, under what conditions, will be justified or tolerated by members of a society.

I have been concerned to point out some of the areas of conflict, of dysfunction, of potential breakdown, as well as some of the more positive features of Maori involvement in education.

1.1 Research

At the most basic level, a data collating exercise is long overdue, which simply tells us the number of Maori parents who serve on the officially constituted bodies (S C, Board of Governors, PTA etc). I have hypothesized that these 'contest' groups will not be successful, in general, in inducing Maori membership.

I have further hypothesized that the reason for the relative non-involvement is a consequence of normative and 'acceptant' views of shared convictions held by Pakehas and taken-for-granted by Pakehas of Maoris.

I have come down fairly hard on 'contest' groups. As has also been suggested, participation of this form has long been firmly entrenched into the traditions of our education system. My criticism is not of 'contest' groups per se but simply, that for the vast majority of Macri parents they have not touched the essentials and as a result, are not considered as a viable approach for participation in the affairs of education. This whole area needs empirical validation.

I have argued in favour of 'sponsored' participation and especially for their emergence at the local level. I have suggested that the machinery already exists for this to happen - that is, the transformation of local Maori 'interest' groups, charged with the additional responsibility of representing Maori views at the local level, on educational concerns.

It would be interesting to know the degree of support both from Maori and non-Maori participation along rural-urban continuum, minority-majority continuum, subordinate-dominant continuum are all hypotheses in search of verification.

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1.2 Policy

It is most unlikely that schools or the education system can in the short term alter the pattern of relationships that exist outside the immediate influence of the school.

Participation of Maori people only or mainly at the level of officially constituted bodies is obviously not healthy. It is important for both Maori and Pakeha that the minority share in the making of policies at the highest as well as at the lowest level. We are all well aware that policies are made by argumentation and persuasion and in the final analysis, by actions. In education, as in most social institutions, those who make policy decisions, rarely are found "at the chalk face". The small percentage of Maori parents who do participate at the level of action rarely do so as the result of a policy handed down from above. I have suggested that as a matter of expediency such a policy might be necessary.

Throughout, I have argued that the social processes involved in Maori parental participation, or rather, non-participation, should not surprise us. The predictability of non-participation might well be the unconscious decision of an oppressed minority, attempting to communicate their concerns to an as yet larger social system suffering from acute listening impediments.

I have pointed out that this larger social system is one which accords with the goals of a particular group only - that which is Pakeha. From a Maori point of few, the same social situation is often assessed as dysfunctional.

It is the correlates of this argument that I take to be the heart of the matter. It is common to conceive of the differences between Maori and Pakeha parental participation as showing up against the demands and constraints of the environment, the environment itself being taken as a harsh given, present before the matter of ethnic, cultural or racial differences arose. There is another way of viewing the problem, however. Speculatively one can reverse the question and ask what could be sought out from the environment or put into it so that such apparent differences between the groups as there are could count - in fact or in a pearance - for something. The issue, then, is institutional reflexivity. I mean, the capacity of the institution of education to look back at itself, at those features of social organisation which have the effect of confirming our ethnic stereotypes and the prevailing arrangements between the races.

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When the education system goes beyond "the carrot and the stick" and until it learns to share power "with no strings attached", Maori involvement in education will remain peripheral, without teeth and non-commital as at present.

As the reader will not doubt realise the sharing of power is, to begin with, a political issue. It is also a phenomenon that is not readily accepted, and yet, to go beyond the familiar embrace is impossible without that sharing taking place.

A Maori saying is : Ka awhi noa i waho
Kare e urn ki roto
(They embrace outwardly
And never get inside)*

* Dewes 1975

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SURVEY OF SCHOOLS IN ONE SMALL CITY AREA TO ASCERTAIN THE NUMBER OF MAORI PARENTS WHO ARE CURRENTLY SERVING ON LOCAL SCHOOL COMMITTEES, PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES AND BOARDS OF GOVERNORS

(Numbers shown for each school have been added together to show the total number of parents and the number who are Maori)

RURAL SCHOOLS		Maori	Total	
1. Maori Dominant				
School	A	1	5	
	B	3	5	
	C	4	5	
	D	4	5	
	E	7	7	
		19	22	= 86%
2. Maori Minority				
School	F	0	5	
	G	2	10	
		2	15	= 13%
URBAN SCHOOLS				
3. Maori Significant				
School	H	2	19	
	I	2	19	
	J	1	16	
	K	0	15	
	L	10	27	
	M	12	18	
	N	4	19	
		31	133	= 23.3%
4. Maori Minority				
School	O	0	12	
	P	0	11	
	Q	0	14	
	R	0	19	
		0	56	= 0%
5. Maori Proportionate to Pakeha				
School	S	2	21	
	T	0	14	
	U	0	14	
	V	1	14	
	W	1	20	
	X	2	30	
	Y	1	20	
		7	133	= 5.2%

TOTALS:

RURAL

Schools	7
Total Parents	37
Total Maori	21
Proportion Maori	56.7%

URBAN

Schools	18
Total Parents	322
Total Maori	38
Proportion Maori	11.8%

RURAL-URBAN COMBINED

Schools	25
Total Parents	359
Total Maori	59
Proportion Maori	16.4%

APPENDIX II

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE NEW ZEALAND INDIGENOUS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

A Formal Consultative Groups

1 The National Advisory Committee on Maori Education

Set up in 1955.
Advisory to the Minister and Education Department on Maori education.
Reports and recommendations provide the guidelines for policy development.
Reconstituted in 1969 with majority of Maori membership. Maori representation from all North Island education board districts and includes representation of teacher organisations.
Its reports 1970, 1980 are important guidelines.

2 The Advisory Committee on Teaching of Maori

Advisory to the department on the teaching of Maori, resources needed since 1960. Completely Maori membership except for the present chairman (DMI).

3 The Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education

Set up in 1978 to advise the Minister and the department on developments in bilingual education. Includes Maori membership and community representation.

4 Inter-Departmental Committee on Maori Education

A co-ordinating committee with the Department of Maori Affairs, the Maori Education Foundation and Department of Education. Meets every two months to ensure co-ordination of activities with the Maori Affairs "Tu Tangata" programmes, trade training programmes, etc.

5 The Maori Education Foundation

Established in 1961 to promote and provide financial support for Maori education. Major emphasis has been support for students at secondary school, universities and technical institutes, and for Maori pre-school education. The board includes the president of the Maori Women's Welfare League, the NZ Maori Council, one of the Maori Members of Parliament and a Maori member appointed by the Minister of Education.

6 The Ngarimu V.C. Fund Board

A board, chaired by the Minister of Education, responsible for administering awards for post-graduate and university study, and annual essay competitions in primary and secondary schools.

B Other Forms of Consultation and Involvement

1 Attendance of Maori and Island Education officers at national, regional and local meetings in Maori communities, often on marae.

2 Advisers on the Education of Maoris and Pacific Islanders, attendance at regional and local level, Maori meetings and gatherings.

3 Marae courses and "Hui" at which local people are involved and participate as leaders. Principals, teachers, administrators, pre-school teachers.

4 Festivals and cultural gatherings.

5 Involvement and support with "tribal" initiatives and programmes in education, eg, Raukawa, Rakaumonga.

6 Conferences on education held in marae settings and involving local people, eg, Advisers' Conference, Johnson Committee.

7 Seminars in curriculum development, Maori language, bilingual education, social studies, English language held on marae.

8 Vocational guidance, counselling, career programmes held on marae.

9 Cross-Cultural Community Involvement Programmes - visual and language arts programmes held for schools on marae.

10 Community projects - decoration and restoration of meeting houses
Art and craft advisers - Kimiora
Whanau-a-Apanui - school carvings
Opononi
Whaiora

11 Involvement of education with others on marae, community settings, Race Relations Seminars, Transport Department, Police, State Services Commission.